

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 1. (Currently amended) A method for selecting a contact path between a
2 first member of an organization and a target individual, the method comprising:
3 storing in a memory data associated with multiple members of the organization,
4 wherein the data includes data that directly states one or more areas of expertise for plural
5 the multiple members of the organization and the target individual is one of the multiple
6 members of the organization;
7 tracking network communications of the members of the organization;
8 analyzing the level of interaction between the members of the organization based
9 on the network communications to develop a people network;
10 identifying an area of expertise desired by the first member of the organization;
11 processing the data that directly states the one or more areas of expertise for the
12 multiple members of the organization to identify at least the target individual of the
13 organization, wherein the data associated with the target individual states that the target
14 individual has expertise in the area of expertise desired by the first member of the
15 organization; and
16 selecting a contact path between the first member of the organization and the
17 target individual, the contact path including one or more members of the organization
18 having at least a predetermined level of interaction with the first member and the target
19 individual and the contact path identifies one or more members of the organization that
20 represent a proposed path through the people network for the first member to contact the
21 target individual ~~a member of the organization having the desired expertise indicated in~~
22 ~~the memory.~~

1 2. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1 further comprising:
2 modeling the people network of the organization as a directed graph having plural
3 nodes representing members of the organization and plural edges representing levels of
4 interaction between members of the organization;
5 wherein analyzing the level of interaction comprises analyzing the edges
6 associated with the first member and the target individual.

1 3. (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein each edge comprises one
2 or more weights, each weight representing a level of interaction for one type of network
3 communication.

1 4. (Original) The method of Claim 3 wherein one weight represents the
2 level of interaction for e-mail communication.

1 5. (Original) The method of Claim 3 wherein one weight represents the
2 level of interaction for instant messenger communication.

1 6. (Original) The method of Claim 3 wherein one weight represents the
2 level of interaction for telephone communication.

1 7. (Canceled).

1 8. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1 wherein:
2 selecting a contact path further comprises selecting plural contact paths, each
3 contact path representing a proposed path through the people network for the first
4 member to contact a member of the organization having the desired expertise.

1 9. (Original) The method of Claim 8 further comprising graphically
2 depicting the plural contact paths as nodes representing members of the organization and
3 edges representing the level of interaction between the members, each node and edge
4 having an appearance that corresponds to the strength of the contact path.

1 10. (Currently amended) A system for determining a people network
2 representation of an organization, the system comprising:
3 a memory to store data associated with multiple members of the organization,
4 wherein the data includes data that directly states one or more areas of expertise for ~~plural~~
5 the multiple members of the organization;

6 a communications network operable to exchange communications between plural
7 members of the organization;

8 a people network model module interfaced with the communications network and
9 interfaced with the memory and operable to model communications of the
10 communications network;

11 an interaction level analyzer module interfaced with the people network model
12 module and operable to apply a model of the communications to the level of interaction
13 of the plural members to determine a people network representation; and

14 a target locator module interfaced with the people network model and the
15 interaction level analyzer module, the target locator module operable to accept a query
16 from a first member for members of the organization having a desired expertise, to
17 process the data that directly states the one or more areas of expertise for the multiple
18 members of the organization to identify at least one or more target individuals of the
19 organization, wherein the data associated with each target individual states that each
20 target individual has expertise in an area of expertise desired by the first member of the
21 organization, and to provide the first member with one or more target individuals based
22 on the desired expertise and the level of interaction of the first member with members of
23 the organization.

1 11. (Original) The system of Claim 10 further comprising a graphical user
2 interface operable to depict a visualization of the people network of a selected member of
3 the organization.

1 12. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 11 wherein the
2 graphical user interface depicts a selected member's people network representation as
3 plural nodes interfaced with edges, the nodes representing members of the network and
4 the lines representing the level of interaction between the members.

1 13. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 11 wherein the
2 graphical user interface depicts the first member's people network representation as a
3 bullseye having the first member at the center and members of the organization
4 distributed in successive rings representing the level of interaction with the first member.

1 14. (Original) The system of Claim 10 wherein the people network model
2 module is further operable to model the people network of the organization as a directed
3 graph having plural nodes and edges, the nodes representing members of the organization
4 and the edges representing the level of interaction between nodes.

1 15. (Canceled).

1 16. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 10 wherein the target
2 locator module is further operable to provide target individuals using a shortest path
3 determination to prioritize target individuals in order of strongest contact path with the
4 first member.

1 17. (Currently amended) A method of using a computer system for
2 determining a target individual having expertise in a subject matter of interest to a first
3 member of an organization, the method comprising executing code stored in the
4 computer system for:
5 storing in a memory data associated with multiple members of the organization,
6 wherein the data includes data that directly states one or more areas of expertise for plural
7 the multiple members of the organization and the target individual is one of the multiple
8 members of the organization;
9 ~~identifying from the memory members of the organization having expertise in the~~
10 ~~subject matter;~~
11 processing the data that directly states the one or more areas of expertise for the
12 multiple members of the organization to identify one or more target individuals of the
13 organization, wherein the data associated with each target individual states that the target
14 individual has expertise in the subject matter;
15 selecting as target individuals only the identified members having at least a
16 predetermined level of electronic communication interaction with the first member and
17 the expertise in the subject matter as stated in the data associated with each target
18 individual; and

19 providing the first member with at least one contact path to each of the target
20 individuals.

1 18. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 17 wherein selecting
2 as target individuals further comprises identifying members having contact paths of less
3 than a predetermined number of intervening members between the target individual and
4 the first member.

1 19. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 17 wherein providing
2 the first member with contact paths comprises:
3 modeling a people network of the organization based on communications of
4 members of the organization across a network; and
5 determining the contact paths by analyzing the level of interaction between
6 members of the organization.

1 20. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein modeling a people
2 network comprises representing the people network as a directed graph having a node for
3 each member of the organization, the nodes interfaced by edges representing levels of
4 interaction.

1 21. (Original) The method of Claim 20 wherein the communications
2 network supports plural type of communication and wherein each edge has a set of
3 weights, each type of communication having an associated weight.

1 22. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein the communications
2 comprise e-mail communications.

1 23. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein the communications
2 comprise instant message communications.

1 24. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein the communications
2 comprise phone communications.

1 25. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein determining the contact
2 paths comprises performing a strongest path analysis using the people network model to
3 prioritize target individuals.

1 26. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1 wherein selecting a
2 contact path between the first member of the organization and the target individual
3 comprises:
4 selecting a contact path between the first member of the organization and the
5 target individual, wherein the contact path includes at least one intervening member of
6 the organization between the first member and the target individual.

1 27. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 10 wherein the people
2 network representation includes a contact path between the first member and the one or
3 more target individuals and the contact path includes at least one intervening members of
4 the organization between the first member and at least one of the one or more target
5 individuals.

1 28. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 17 wherein providing
2 the first member with at least one contact path to each of the target individuals comprises:
3 providing the first member with at least one contact path to each of the target
4 individuals, wherein the contact path includes at least one intervening member of the
5 organization between the first member and the target individual.

1 29. (New) The method of Claim 1 further comprising:
2 providing data to a computer system for displaying the contact path and the
3 expertise of the of target individual.

1 30. (New) The method of Claim 1 wherein storing in a memory further
2 comprises:
3 storing the data in a contact database and the data, including the data that states
4 the one or more areas of expertise for the multiple members of the organization, is stored
5 in the contact database.

1 31. (New) The system of Claim 10 wherein the memory comprises a contact
2 database and the data, including the data that states the one or more areas of expertise for
3 the multiple members of the organization, is stored in the contact database.

1 32. (New) The system of Claim 10 further comprising:
2 a display module to provide data for displaying of target individuals with rankings
3 based on expertise.

1 33. (New) The method of Claim 17 further comprising:
2 providing data to a computer system for displaying the contact path and the
3 expertise of the of target individual.

1 34. (New) The method of Claim 17 wherein storing in a memory further
2 comprises:
3 storing the data in a contact database and the data, including the data that states
4 the one or more areas of expertise for the multiple members of the organization, is stored
5 in the contact database.